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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

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(Concluded from page 138)

Why, then, should we study the Classics?

(1) In general, because "they embody and present a story, a criticism, and an interpretation of an interesting development of social life that affords the best possible introduction to an intelligent appreciation of our own" (11). We are racially one with the Greeks and the Romans, and so of necessity more intimately interested in them than in any other race. There is, then, true genetic relationship almost everywhere between our own life and that of the Greeks and the Romans, and in consequence between us and the Greeks and the Romans a bond of immediate human relationship. These things together constitute the most natural ground for intellectual training, for culture, and for a live interest in the larger racial future. If an individual lacks these things, he cannot safely participate in the molding of our various institutions to meet the ever-varying practical demands of the day.

(2) Three-fourths of our English words had their origin in the struggles of the Greeks and the Romans for self-expression and social communication (11).

On the one hand they constitute the essential precipitates of the conditions they were originally invented to portray, together with additional experience embodied within them from age to age. They therefore constitute one of our most complete and reliable sources of information regarding the classic civilizations of Greece and Rome. On the other hand, as the medium of expression of our own poets, orators, essayists, scientists, historians, and great teachers of every kind, these words are used with deep consciousness of this historic development. If, therefore, we would fully comprehend the message of our own prophets of every age, we must ourselves be equally alive to the human experience embodied in the words they use,—a thing we can do most directly, thoroughly, and systematically by studying the original languages contributory to our own, together with the conditions out of which they grew. It is only by mastering our language, this great instrument of social communication, that we can even be intelligent followers and supporters of our own leaders; and only so, in turn, may we fit ourselves for conspicuous and satisfying leadership in any sphere through the words of our mouths or of our pens.

(3) Since the way of intellectual achievement lies more and more in criticism, rather than in original observation and induction, study of the Classics is the surest road to critical ability in any field where a literature of the subject exists. Here, as the following

quotation shows, Mr. Norris had much the same view (12) as that taken by Mr. Zane, the lawyer, as set forth in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*, 8. 57-58.

In the first place, most of our modern philosophy and scientific theory was anticipated by classic myth and speculation, familiarity with which affords the best natural introduction to modern theory and thence to independent study. In the second place, by very reason of the part played by contrast in all intellectual life, criticism is the surest and most stimulating motivation to mental activity. But sound criticism as a basis for original contribution in any field implies a complete and intimate knowledge of the literature of that field, i.e., of the ideal series. And this in turn demands the ability patiently to search the scriptures with microscopic care for direct knowledge and indirect implication and inference. Scientific discovery and original contribution in whatever field are becoming more and more a matter of reading, weighing authorities, and searching for implications, than of original observation in the laboratory. Thus the power of patient, sustained, microscopic attention to the printed page, as being the necessary requisite to any kind of signal achievement, is one of the greatest social values an individual can possess; and it is better acquired as a mere by-product of intelligent study of the classics than from any other training. The secret of the acquisition of this power, aside from the direct gains of accurate vocabulary and range of mental experience, lies in the fact of the exceedingly numerous and minute contrasts of word forms and meanings and thought relations with which the student of the classics must constantly deal.

(4) With our new evolutionistic philosophy, we are in constant need of new knowledge of racial experience as indicated in facts heretofore overlooked or newly discovered, especially of the two great classical civilizations, for the reasons set forth so clearly in paragraph 4 of this summary (page 137, column 1). Only the classical scholar can discover new facts about the classical civilizations or revise, as may be needed, our interpretation of those facts, and so keep before us the most truthful and therefore most valuably suggestive contrast to our own civilization.

And with him, as products and by-products of the same training, we must have a long train of public spirited individuals to support him in his work,—of publishers, journalists, lecturers, and teachers to spread the results of his findings,—and finally the largest possible element of our body politic to appreciate the meaning that these old civilizations have for us.

As an illustration of the value of the Classics as affording a genetic view of an institution, Mr. Norris discusses American athletics and their relation to Greek

athletics, finding a link between the two in the revival of the Olympic games. One man, Mr. E. Norman Gardiner, a scholar, a master, in this field, has given us a book on Greek Athletic Sports and Festivals.

But the great un-Greeked mass of our population must take his word for every statement he makes. He cites his authorities; but their names and their statements also must be taken on faith. It is well that we can take other men's words for what we cannot verify for ourselves; but it would be a pretty unsatisfactory mental furnishing that was all of this nature, and would result in an equally faulty social equilibrium. The statements of fact in this book may in general be relied upon because the author is a careful, painstaking scholar and wrote in the full consciousness that his every assertion will be critically scanned by other scholars. But with all the learning embodied in this book, no person could become a master of the subject by learning verbatim every statement contained within it. Even if he knew Greek and committed to memory every statement of the original sources upon which the thesis is presented, and every argument and relation deduced from these sources, he could not speak with authority upon the subject. For he could not possibly have an authoritative knowledge of this special subject save against the background of a full and intimate knowledge of the whole range of Greek life and thought, which the author possesses.

To secure in each generation a few leaders in various domains, we must train several million youths. Since we know not in advance what any child will become, we must look on every boy as a possible president or senator, or the like. Intelligent democracy implies and demands intelligent criticism on the part of all its constituent individuals. Hence, in the end extra work bestowed in the training of those who fall behind in the race for president has not been lost; its results have all been appropriated and wrought into our social fabric. So, though not all who study the Classics study them to the end, the instruction bestowed on those who do not remain is not lost. Those who drop out may serve well the race, by taking up the discoveries of those who persist, and assimilating them into social thought and using them for the development of the race.

The contributions of Greece and Rome to a genetic view of our own experience have by no means all been made. We are daily learning new things about ancient life, many of which cause us to revise our interpretations of that life. Many a standard work on ancient life is in need of rewriting.

We need classical scholars to carry on all such work, teachers to start and prepare them, and the largest possible classically trained residue in our populace, that our social group as a whole may possess a large, cultural perspective of all varied interests, and that it may intelligently avail itself of the lessons of the past in the interest of our continued welfare and development (17).

The need of study of the Classics and instruction in the Classics will endure so long as there is a nation on earth to avail itself of the racial experience of the past as vantage ground for its further activity and development (17).

In conclusion, Professor Norris discusses the 'practical' value of the study of the Classics. To most persons, the word 'practical' covers the things for which there is an obvious and tangible economic demand.

But there is another, a larger practical. The supreme practical earthly thing is that society, the race, shall live and develop; that is, that it shall live by developing. It may well be that the classics bear a closer relation to this larger practical than to the economically practical. The philosopher and the student of the classics may be just as practical in their attitudes towards life and in their activities as may the book-keeper, the mechanic, or the engineer. Intelligence is the supreme function, and knowledge the supreme commodity in the racial economy. Nothing should be learned that is not practical; but no knowledge is impractical if acquired in right ways and associated in right relations. And the most valuable and expert knowledge may be impractical and vicious, as when a knowledge of chemistry is turned to the adulteration of foods and other commodities. Even if study of the classics bore no direct relation to mental efficiency outside its own field, yet this study and the resultant orientation are necessary to a genetic, cultural, critical knowledge of our own life,—a knowledge that is freighted with sensibility of the human experience by which our own racial progress has been achieved, a knowledge that raises all life beyond the halo of the dollar-mark, a knowledge organized upon the basis of its natural associations, and therefore most interesting, most easily acquired, most coherently organized, and most valuable socially.

The genetic, perspective, cultural view of all cosmic and human experience, specially illustrated by study of the classics, is the way of mental growth and scholarship. Classical study is for us of Anglo-Saxon civilization the main highway to critical ability whereby knowledge is extended and perfected, communicated and assimilated. And knowledge is the only sure means and safeguard in the endeavor after racial immortality, in which we of America may with greatest faith expect to share.

C. K.

THE PROSECUTION OF MILO

A CASE OF HOMICIDE, WITH A PLEA OF SELF-DEFENSE¹

The death of Publius Clodius occurred on January 18, 52 B. C., on the Appian Way². Clodius was on horseback, going in the direction of Rome, and was attended by about 30 armed men. At the same time, T. Annii Milo was traveling along the Appian Way, going from Rome, riding in a litter with his wife. He was attended by a few friends, and had about 300 followers in his retinue. It was later shown that the majority of these were women and children. The two parties met at Bovillae, about ten miles from Rome,

¹Our knowledge of the Roman criminal law on some of the subjects treated in this article is a matter of inference rather than of accurate citation in ancient sources. I have, therefore, inserted brief statements of the corresponding American Law, wherever it has seemed appropriate, or interesting. These are taken from the American and English Encyclopedia of Law, Second Edition (abbreviated A. E. E. L.), unless otherwise specified. Those who are legally curious will be interested to notice how closely Cicero's reasoning is in harmony with accepted doctrine in England and the United States on matters of self-defense, justifiable homicide, and confessions.

A. C. Clark's edition of Cicero's *Pro Milone*, including the Commentary of Asconius (abbreviated Asc.), has been used for citation and references.

²Asc. 32 : a. d. xiii Kal. Febr. There were 29 days in January, until Caesar's reform of the calendar.